

Statement Daniel Reeves, 1997

I am not so sure I know what I am doing anymore with this work, the temptation is to try and say something meaningful and excruciatingly resonant about the range of tapes and installations which I have produced over the years that will be remembered for at least a week and a half. But in all humility, the work is a gift to my own attempts at regeneration as much it is an offering of creative imagination.

Most of these works clamoured to get done, took on a life of their own and forced my hand. That is to say they would not let me give up, even when I desperately wanted to. Despite the relative success involved in the field, most of this work remains marginalized in the same way that poetry is subsumed by mass culture. I have not sliced up any sharks lately or covered my body in chocolate and I am not about to change course now that I am up to my ass in the midstream of a most unpredictable life. This work is in some way, shadow work. I think that it is possible to celebrate shadow work, which is indeed the real work in a time when everything else is for sale. It has been said that an artist is in fact given one work to do in her or his life and just keeps cutting, carving, drawing, singing, poking and banging away at this theme, subject, inspiration, concept, motif or obsession until one or the other of them dies.... I think this lies close to the truth. I am a slave to virtuosity. It seems that the best ideas tend to arrive unannounced like unexpected guests, creeping in at dawn or in that liminal zone at the threshold of sleep. The gravitational pull in all of my work is the so-called great matter... that is the matter of life and death. It is as if something had left a constantly recurring wake up call from the war going off in my chest. This is akin to the advisor and ally that death becomes in the work of Casteneda, the dream work of Jung and the films of Maya Deren. I am puzzled by peoples fascination with near-death experience and wonder if our fascination with glamour, power and distortion are just a string of near-life experiences that serve as ersatz life until the real thing shows up in a wild flash just before death. The airline magazines tell me that the fear of death comes in seventh place on a scale of one to ten for most folk. The terror surrounding speaking in public is numero uno followed by dental work in 3rd and financial problems in 5th. It is of course, a race with no winners.

I wish that some big corporation would loan me a sophisticated non-linear edit suite for one year so I could finish about six works which will be otherwise stillborn due to my chronic financial prostration around this work. They could pretend to be like my art parents and cluck approvingly from the boardroom or be disarmingly embarrassed when the stockholders come round for tea...whichever comes first... I give high quality maintenance and agree wholeheartedly with the Dalai Lama that everyone has a basic good heart. And by the way if anyone is to be cloned or brought back it should be Frank Zappa....

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